



PENNY MORDAUNT MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR PORTSMOUTH NORTH
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North Harbour
Portsmouth
Hampshire PO6 3EN

The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Our Ref: PM20773

29th November 2023

Dear The Rt. Hon Claire Couthino MP

Re: National Infrastructure Planning Aquind Interconnector Scheme

Thank you for acknowledging my correspondence of the 22nd of September 2023 regarding the above. As you will be aware I previously wrote to express my concerns about the project and its potential impact on Portsmouth, if approved, in part not only to reiterate my own objections, but also those of local community.

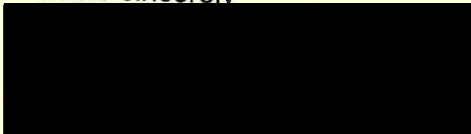
As I am sure you are aware the local community continue to be strongly opposed to the project and members of the Let's Stop Aquind Campaign Group visited London in early November to urge a prompt decision.

The project and its potential for disruption and harm continues to not only unsettle residents but is also causing significant anxiety within the local community, and this is being exacerbated by the length of time it is taking to reach a decision following the High Court judgement earlier this year.

For context it, is five years since my office first received concerns from constituents that they had received communications from Aquind's project management team notifying them of the intent to install an interconnector; without any prior consultation, nor were any sureties offered in respect of difficulties this may cause residents in being able to obtain mortgages.

I very much appreciate the importance of considering all the available information; however, my own view is that the prior decision not to grant consent was the correct one. The local community and local authority is of this view also and I would therefore ask for a decision to be made urgently. Resident's have been very patient thus far and are anxious for the correct decision to be reached.

Yours sincerely


Penny Mordaunt MP

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22nd September 2023

Dear The Rt.Hon Claire Couthino MP

Re: National Infrastructure Planning Aquind Interconnector Scheme

I wrote to your predecessor to express my concerns about the Aquind Interconnector project and its potential impact on Portsmouth if approved and I thought it would be helpful if I wrote to reiterate not only my own concerns about this project but also those of the local community, given your recent appointment.

I would expect that you have already been briefed by your Department so I will not detail all of the concerns I and the local community have – these are a matter of public record, but I did wish to particularly impress upon you my specific concern that the project is seeking to conceal a secondary function to accommodate cabling, which is not dependent on the projects primary purpose. I am very concerned that the application is not only being misused but that the true motives of the applicant are questionable.

No doubt you will be aware of the Portsmouth community's strong opposition to the project. The community remains of the view that there would be little benefit in Portsmouth being the landfall site for the project, nor do they believe that the case has been sufficiently made for Portsmouth being selected. Given my own concerns about the misuse of the application, and the communities the question therefore must be – why Portsmouth?

I was supportive of the Government's previous decision to refuse consent, and this remains the case, despite the recent judgment set down by the High Court. Throughout Aquind has done little to reassure the local community of its intentions resulting in a lack of transparency, which calls into question not only the scheme's viability but also its integrity.

I am aware of your predecessor's communication with the Local Authority regarding an update in respect of the requirement for a Co-Operation Agreement between the Council and Aquind if Aquind successfully achieves development consent. Whilst there is good reasoning for seeking this update, I am concerned that Aquind is attempting to portray this as an acceptance of the project, and that this must mean a favourable decision in due. This

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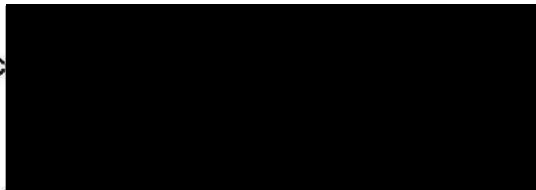


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requires careful management and handling as it has alarmed some within the local community, many of whom will be hoping that a decision will be reached shortly.

I would ask that this decision be made as soon as possible after careful consideration of the facts. It is now nearly five years since I first became aware of this project and the alarm it was causing; the local community is waiting for a decision, and I would ask that this is made swiftly.

Yours sincerely



Penny Mordaunt MP

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